

JEFFERSON'S REASONS

One of Jefferson's reasons for supporting state governments in all their rights was that they were the surest bulwark against anti-republican tendencies. Those anti-republican tendencies exist today, and the bulwark can not be dispensed with. While popular government is growing stronger all over the world, there are still those in this country who distrust the people. There are many prominent men who regard Hamilton as the greatest of the political thinkers of his day, although his statesmanship can not be considered independently of the views embodied in his plan of government. There are those who are constantly irritated by the limitations which the constitution has placed upon the sphere of the federal government, and who resent the independence of the state in its local affairs. This very irritation ought to be a warning; if there are those who are irritated because they can not override the wishes of the community, what would be the irritation in the community if the wishes of its members were overridden? A systematic absorption of power by the federal government would not only cause discontent and weaken the attachment of the people for the government, but a withdrawal of power from the state would breed indifference to public affairs—the forerunner of despotism.

The exercise by the federal government of restraining power is not so objectionable as the exercise of creative power, but even in the exercise of restraining power care should be taken to preserve to the states the exercise of concurrent authority, so that the state government, as well as the national government can stand guard over the rights of the citizen.

The demand for the enlargement of the powers of the federal government comes from two sources, viz., from those who believe with Hamilton in the theory of centralization, and from those who want legislation which the state's rights doctrine obstructs. Of these two classes the last is most influential, because the members of this class impart to their method the strength supplied by the object aimed at. An abstract theory seldom provokes discussion, but wars have been fought over a theory embodied in a concrete issue.

THE HIGHEST OFFICE

The following letter is a sample of many letters Mr. Bryan has recently received:

"January 22, 1912.—Hon. William J. Bryan, Lincoln, Neb. My Dear Mr. Bryan: As one of the 'six million' democrats whom you represented and whose party rights and honor you defended at the meeting of the national committee in Washington on January 5th, I thank you.

"We have had many official presidents in Washington since you first began being our candidate' and although from one administration to the next the political, financial, and industrial affairs of our country have gone from bad to worse, we have not failed to distinguish between the office and the man, and with every act of misfeasance on the part of the successive incumbents six-million-and-a-half of us have in our minds and hearts renewed our standing vote for Bryan. So that you have thus been perpetually elected to defend the faith of the democracy in the institutions of free government.

"That you are fulfilling your trust earnestly and well attest the thunder of admiring approval from these millions of your fellow citizens, echoed and re-echoed from every human breast that harbors hope of liberty. Very sincerely yours,

DAVID R. SMITH."

To say that one has been "perpetually elected to defend the faith of the democracy in the institutions of free government" is to say that one has been elected to the highest of all human offices. Mr. Bryan appreciates the compliment paid him but his efforts have been, and now are, to the end that every American citizen, however humble his station in life may be, will awaken to the fact that he, too, has been chosen for this great office—that every American has been "perpetually elected to defend the faith of the democracy in the institutions of free government."

Let us hope that every democrat will show himself worthy of this great honor.

A GOOD PLATFORM

Ex-Mayor Crabtree of Chattanooga, announces his candidacy for governor on a platform which The Commoner is glad to present to its readers: "I believe the governing business should, in practice as well as in theory, begin with the voters, and I have little confidence in any man who follows the beaten path of announcing his

candidacy as a result of back-room consultations with professional politicians, and closed door conferences with the attorneys and agents of special interests.

"I have not, therefore, conferred with nor sought the advice of any interested politicians or of any agents or attorneys of privilege seeking organizations.

"I would, however, very much appreciate the advice and opinion of those democrats who have no axes to grind, and who desire only such measures and methods in state legislation and government as will result in equal and impartial benefit to all the people.

"As fundamental principles I believe in the rule of the people in party management and state government; in the nomination of all candidates for office by direct primaries; in the elimination of machine politics within the party; in legislation for the benefit of all the people, and not for special interests at the expense of the masses.

"I favor more stringent criminal laws against all forms of graft, bribery and corruption, and the passage of laws that will effectively prevent the acceptance of free passes and other gratuities by public officials.

"I favor a corrupt practices act which shall require the publication, before election, of an itemized statement of each candidate's campaign and election receipts and expenses, and I am opposed to campaign contributions from corporations or individuals who have any selfish interests in legislation or administration. Should I become a candidate I will not accept contributions to the expenses of my campaign from such sources."

SENATE DEMANDS INVESTIGATION

Following is an Associated Press dispatch: Washington, Feb. 12.—The proposed congressional investigation of the "money trust" got an unlooked for impetus today in the senate and had some developments in the house. Senator Kenyon, republican, and Senator Lea, democrat, joined in framing a proposal for an investigation by six men to be drawn from both houses. This is expected to be introduced in the senate in the form of a joint resolution which will require the concurrence of the house. With the house investigation well on its way to the banking and currency commission as was directed by the democratic caucus, against the wishes of Chairman Henry of the rules committee, William J. Bryan and others, a senate resolution of inquiry would put a new feature on the fight.

Arthur E. Stillwell, builder of the Kansas City, Mexico & Orient railway, who has said he learned of the money trust in financing his railroad, had a conference with Attorney General Wickersham. Neither of the men would discuss it but it was known that Mr. Stillwell told the attorney general about the alleged money monopoly.

The house rules committee got together today to discuss a procedure for the banking and currency committee. Chairman Pujo, of the latter committee, has submitted a resolution for an investigation which makes no mention of a money trust. Statements by several democratic members indicated that there was no complete harmony in the committee. Chairman Henry of the rules committee, who fought for a special investigation, wanted to get some of his original resolution into the Pujo resolution, but did not succeed. There is some conflict in sight where the subject of a money trust might lap over into the jurisdiction of some other committee.

ENTHUSIASTIC

Some of the republican papers are enthusiastic in their support in the action of the house caucus in rejecting Mr. Henry's plan for investigation of the money trust. The Chicago Record-Herald says that on that occasion "mere common sense prevailed in the democratic caucus."

"Mere common sense" from the Wall street viewpoint is "letting well enough alone" whenever it is proposed to give the people genuine protection from monopoly. The money monopoly is the worst of all. We are having a real investigation of the Steel trust and why not a real investigation of the Money trust? Why is it so easy to get an investigation like the one proposed against Secretary of Agriculture Wilson and practically impossible to get an investigation of the power that holds the commerce of the world within the hollow of its hand?

Now what do these democrats think who accused Mr. Bryan of misrepresenting Mr. Underwood?

MR. BRYAN IN TEXAS

Following is an Associated Press dispatch: Dallas, Tex., Jan. 30.—In the opinion of W. J. Bryan, Governor Woodrow Wilson, of New Jersey, has been helped rather than hurt because of his controversy with Col. Henry Watterston, and he considers Governor Wilson "right in believing that a man is sometimes hurt by the sort of men clamorous in his support."

"I am under no bond to keep the peace," Mr. Bryan said tonight in an interview given while waiting for his train enroute to his farm at Mission, Tex. "Harmony is not the most desirable thing in public life. The organization proceeding upon that principle can progress only as fast as the slowest of its elements."

The contest in Missouri between Speaker Champ Clark and former Governor Joseph W. Folk he described as "distinctly unfortunate."

"Whatever the result of the primaries," Mr. Bryan said, "it is to fear that either of the contestants will have weakened his chance of carrying Missouri in the general election.

"It was a mistake that the Clark men would not accept the Stephens suggestion, which I heartily approved, that the two Missouri men divide the vote of the state on the first ballot in the national convention and that the one who secured the larger vote in the delegations from the other states take the full vote of the delegation afterward."

"How about the letter Governor Wilson wrote to A. H. Joline several years ago?" Mr. Bryan was asked.

"A shining illustration that Mr. Wilson is the best modern example of Saul of Tarsus," Mr. Bryan exclaimed. "He has been soundly converted. Anyone who talks with him or hears him will be convinced of that. Mr. Wilson's sort of progressiveness is best illustrated in the Smith incident in New Jersey."

Mr. Bryan said he would not now make any announcement as to his choice of candidates for the democratic nomination.

"There will be a campaign in my state in about two months," Mr. Bryan continued. "I expect to be in that campaign and before that time to decide between the democratic presidential candidates. We have a splendid opportunity to win, and I hope for the selection of that man who can unite the democratic elements."

Mr. Bryan also expressed his approval of presidential preference primaries.

"While primaries are still in the experimental stage to a large extent," he said, "I favor this method of selecting candidates. Ultimately I favor the making of a majority vote the deciding method in primaries."

CONGRATULATIONS TO MISSOURI

Missouri democrats are to be congratulated upon the settlement of the contest between Messrs. Folk and Clark. That contest promised to have demoralizing effect not only upon the party in the state but upon the national party. Missouri is to be congratulated that the differences have been settled and every democrat who had a part in bringing about that settlement is entitled to thanks.

THE POSTAL SAVINGS BANK

The postal savings bank is a success, though but slowly extending its usefulness. The administration has moved very leisurely; but it has moved. Why not increase its value? The limit of deposit ought to be raised and its security should be made available for the protection of ALL who handle trust funds. Why should not executors, administrators and trustees be allowed to deposit without limit?

PROGRESS

We are making progress. More than one-third of the democrats of the house refused to allow Mr. Underwood to lead them into the Wall street net. They are not supporting him quite as unanimously as they did (according to the plutocratic press) when a few weeks-ago he denounced Mr. Bryan.

WILL KEEP THEM BUSY

Some of the democratic congressmen seem to think that they must vote with Wall street to show their independence of Bryan. Well, that excuse may fool their constituents but they will have to use it quite often for Mr. Bryan will continue to fight Wall street influence over democrats in congress and out.

Won't it look funny to see Pujo investigating the Money trust?